

AUSTRIAN INFORMATION

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AUSTRIAN ENVOY CONFERS WITH SECRETARY ACHESON ON AUSTRIAN TREATY.

The Austrian Minister in Washington, Dr. Ludwig Kleinwaechter, was received on July 11th by the Hon. Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State. The results of the last Foreign Ministers' Conference in Paris as relating to the Austrian State Treaty were discussed.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS OF AUSTRIAN TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. The Big Four Foreign Ministers' deputies who have resumed drafting an Austrian Treaty in London on July 1st, have made good progress during the last two weeks. Article 5, which sets the future boundaries of Austria as those in effect before January 1, 1938 - before her annexation by Germany - was quickly approved by all four deputies. The deputies also smoothly disposed of Article 2 under which each of the Big Four pledges to respect Austria's independence and territorial integrity. A subordinate clause that had provided for "consultation" in the event of a threat to Austria was finally eliminated, all four powers agreeing that such a contingency already was covered by United Nations responsibility.

Agreement also was reached on Article 34 barring payment of reparations by Austria and on Article 45 which entitles Yugoslavia to seize and retain all Austrian properties in Yugoslavia. This was seen as a formality since, in effect, the Yugoslav Government has long since done this.

Georgi N. Zarubin, Soviet Ambassador in London and deputy for the Soviet Union, announced that he was submitting a detailed memorandum listing the specific rights to which the Croat and Slovene minorities in Austria should be entitled. The Western Powers, on the other hand, insisted that in Paris the Foreign Ministers had agreed this should be the Austrian Government's own responsibility.

The Western Deputies also objected to some of the Russian terms for a settlement of the German assets problem. Soviet Ambassador Zarubin insisted that the lump sum of 150 million dollars, agreed upon by the Foreign Ministers in Paris, be paid by Austria in quarterly instalments of \$6,250,000 over six years. He also asked that promissory notes be issued to the Bank of Russia by the Austrian National Bank. Mr. Samuel Reber, the American deputy, arguing that quarterly payments would impose too great a strain on Austria's already burdened economy, proposed that the Soviet Union take only its first year's payment in quarterly instalments and the remaining five years' payments in annual instalments, and that the promissory notes be made non-transferable and that they bear no interest.

A detailed list of oil and Danube Shipping Company assets in Eastern Austria that will pass to the Soviet Union under the terms of the recent Paris agreement was submitted by the Soviet Delegation and is now carefully examined by the Western Deputies and their staffs. These include rights to properties totaling 60 per cent of the areas in Eastern Austria already under oil exploration contracts; rights to specific properties or areas equivalent to 60 per cent of the total production of crude oil throughout Austria in 1947; oil refineries in Eastern Austria having in 1947 a capacity of 420,000 tons of crude oil, plus those undertakings concerned with the distribution of oil-refined products already at Soviet disposition.

The Soviet delegate agreed that the "profit and other income" that the Soviet Union might receive from its concessions in Austria should be determined in strict accordance with Austrian law. This would entail payment to Austria of taxes and other legal charges. The Western deputies for their part agreed that Austrian law should be specifically drafted to guarantee the Soviet Union's right to export profits and other income from its oil and shipping concessions.

FINAL DATE FOR AUSTRIAN ELECTIONS SET FOR OCTOBER 9, 1949. In its session of June 30th, the Principal Committee of the Austrian Parliament decided that this year's general Parliamentary elections

will be held on October 9th. The general electoral procedures (Wahlordnung) had already been approved by Parliament in May and on June 24th, this decision was upheld by the Allied Control Council.

The elections for the National Council or Lower House (Nationalrat), which has 165 Deputies, will be conducted in accordance with the principles of proportional representation on the basis of "listvoting", although every voter will have the opportunity of crossing out the names of party candidates on his ballot and add others which he favors. In addition to the elections for the National Council, most federal provinces and Vienna will simultaneously hold elections for their respective State Assemblies (Landtagswahlen) or, in the case of Vienna, for the City Council (Gemeinderat). The newly-elected State Assemblies will then select from their own bodies the members to the Federal Council (Bundesrat), each state or province being represented in the Federal Council by a number of Councillors varying with the state's size. So far, only three parties will definitely participate in the election: the Austrian People's Party (Oesterreichische Volkspartei) which, at the present time, is the majority party, its partner in the coalition government -- the Socialist Party, and the Communist Party which is not represented in the present government and which was able to obtain only 5% of the votes during the last election. In addition to the above, there are several other political groups which would like to enter their candidates in the election campaign. But, in its session of September 11th 1945, the Allied Council decided that only the three above-listed parties would be permitted to participate and, as yet, the Allies have been unable to agree on the admission of other parties. Austria's Minister of the Interior, however, takes the position that the Control Agreement of June 1946 removed the necessity for Allied Council approval of new parties from the Council's sphere of competence and that new parties could therefore be freely established at any time. This difference of views has not yet been resolved and the Executive Committee of the Allied Council is now investigating the applications of over 40 new parties. But most of these groups have practically no chance of obtaining any election successes in as much as they are, at the most, of local significance only and have a very limited number of followers. Some of them represent left-wing tendencies, others have a liberal program and still others are built around right-wing or legitimist associations. The most important political groups, outside of the major parties mentioned, are the left-wing radical Progressive Socialists (Fortschrittliche Sozialisten) under the leadership of the former Socialist Parliamentary Deputy Erwin Scharf, the liberal-minded Democratic Union (Demokratische Union) under the leadership of Prof. Josef Dobretsberger, Rector of the University of Graz, and the right-wing Union of Independents (Verband der Unabhängigen) headed by the Salzburg journalist Dr. Herbert Kraus.

VICE-CHANCELLOR SCHAERF ATTENDING SOCIALIST CONFERENCE IN LONDON.
Austria's Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Adolf Schaerf, left for London on July 7th in his capacity as Chairman of the Austrian Socialist Party to participate in the regular yearly conference of the Committee of the International Socialist Conference (COMISCO) as the representative of the Austrian Socialist Party.

BRITISH LABOUR PARTY OFFICIALS VISIT AUSTRIA. A group of 61 officials of the British Labour Party, the English Federation of Trade Unions and the Cooperative Movement are now on a visit in Austria. They are spending a week in Vienna and will then visit Carinthia, Styria, the Grossglockner Road, Salzburg and Upper Austria.

AUSTRIAN CONSULAR OFFICIAL ARRESTED IN BUCAREST. Alexander Herter, an official of the Austrian Legation in Bucharest, was arrested at the end of June by Rumanian police under the unsubstantiated accusation of espionage. A note of protest by the Austrian Minister has so far remained unanswered.

SOVIETS RELEASE 30 ARRESTED AUSTRIANS. At the end of June, the Soviet authorities repatriated 30 Austrians who had been arrested by the Russians for various reasons during 1945 and 1946 and deported to Russia. Most of the 30 had been interned in Siberian penal camps. Upon their return, they stated - according to a report in the Vienna daily "Wiener Kurier" - that they had been subjected to hard and heavy work but that their food supply had somewhat improved during the last few years. All the members of this group had received 5 or 6-year jail

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sentences at the hands of Russian military courts in Austria. They reported that at the time of their trials, they were not permitted to have any defense counsel and that the sentences imposed had obviously been fixed beforehand. After notification of sentence, all the Austrians had immediately been taken out of the country. They now owed their liberty to a recent amnesty. Allegedly, other groups of Austrians deported by the Russians during the last years are also on the way home to Austria. There is however no news of any kind from hundreds of others, and a number of arrested Austrians have already met death in penal camps and jails.

FORMER GESTAPO HEAD IN KLAGENFURT SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS. The former Gestapo chief in Klagenfurt, Johann Bauer, was sentenced to 10 years of hard labor and loss of property by the People's Court of Klagenfurt on June 30, 1949. Bauer was found guilty of high treason and of having committed crimes against humanity.

FRENCH REDUCE OCCUPATION CONTROLS IN AUSTRIA. Federal Chancellor Dr. Leopold Figl recently announced that General Emile Béthouart, French High Commissioner in Austria, has advised the Austrian Government that the French occupation authorities have further reduced French control of Austrian nationals in their zone of occupation. Thus, for example, French railroad controls will henceforth be restricted only to French citizens, leaving the checking of Austrian civilians exclusively to the Austrian police.

REMAINS OF DR. THEODOR HERZL TO BE MOVED FROM VIENNA TO ISRAEL. A commemorative ceremony in honor of Dr. Theodor Herzl, the great Zionist leader whose lifespan began and ended in Vienna and whose remains are now buried at the old Doebling Cemetery, will be held in Vienna on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of Dr. Herzl's death. Theodor Herzl's former residence in Vienna has been acquired by the Israel Government and will be converted into a monument to the Father of Zionism. Dr. Herzl's remains will be flown to Jerusalem where a permanent resting place in a mausoleum is to be erected for them. Dr. Schalit, who during his student days in Vienna was secretary to Dr. Herzl, will accompany the remains to the Holy Land.

PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE WELCOMES RETURN TO FREE ECONOMY. The President of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce, Julius Raab, welcomed the abrogation of a series of price control, commodities-control and rationing laws -- which expired on July 1st -- as a return to free economy. He stated that a free economy was the backbone of every free government structure and that only the greatest possible freedom of action in the economic life of a country could contribute to raising the living standards of the mass of its population. The developments of the last year have shown that when rationing was discontinued in various food supply lines, the food supply of the population had improved to a far-reaching extent and the prices in these articles had shown a tendency to drop. There might be some limited justification for a controlled economy in times of special emergency, but on a continuous basis it means the end of all creative initiative and an interference with the consumer's right of free selection from various offers.

FIRST REACTIONS TO THE THIRD PRICE-WAGE AGREEMENT IN AUSTRIA. In its thorough study of the effects and reactions to the Austrian Government's third price-wage agreement, the June issue of the Austrian Institute of Economic Research's Monthly Reports stated that the country's economy had reacted with remarkable quiet to the agreement, during the first four weeks of its application, and that producers, wholesalers, retailers and buyers had shown a high degree of self-restraint.

This calm reaction, the authoritative publication writes, may be due primarily to the current decrease in purchasing power on the part of private consumers but also to the continued favorable development of industrial production and the excellent harvest prospects. Despite the loss of two working days, industrial production and productivity have achieved new post-war records in April, the former by a 115% and the latter by a 79% increase (1937 = 100). According to the reports available to date, this favorable development continued in May, that is after the new price-wage agreement had been made public. The prospects of a greater than average agricultural crop could be endangered only by extraordinary weather changes.

With the exception of those price raises specifically stipulated in the agreement, only relatively minor price increases have occurred so far. This is not because industry has not tried, and understandably so, to pass on at least part of its increased production and distribution costs to the consumer in the form of higher prices. Various producers of price-fixed articles have requested permission to increase their sales prices from their competent trade organizations in order to assure themselves, at least formally, of the right to adjust prices at a later date, irrespective of current sales possibilities. It remains to be seen, however, whether and to what extent producers will be able to take advantage of the price hikes granted them by law in view of the considerably reduced purchasing power of the population.

Free and black market prices have reacted with only small increases immediately after the price-wage agreement. (Black market food prices, for example, increased by 11%; black exchange rates for foreign currency and the open gold price increased by 14%; auction rates at the Vienna Dorotheum remained almost unchanged). This upward trend of prices has been arrested, and a not inconsiderable contributing factor thereof has been the influence of falling prices on the world market; there is evidence that the prices of less essential articles have again regressed.

AUSTRIAN NATIONAL INCOME IN 1948: 25.6 BILLION SCHILLINGS. Austria's national income in 1948 amounted to about 25.6 billion schillings (2.5 billion dollars), according to a report released by the Vienna "Statistische Nachrichten". Of this total amount, 3.11 billions were earned by employers in agriculture and forestry, 1.72 billions by industrial employers and 3.57 by employers and self-supporting individuals in all other fields. Employees and workers in agriculture and forestry earned 1.51 billions, those in industry 3.69 billions and all others 10 billion schillings. Pensioners and social-insurance annuitants received 1.9 billion schillings of the national income.

The average monthly income for all workers and employees in industry, trade and public service (excluding agriculture and forestry amounted to 690 schillings; the average monthly income of agricultural and forestry workers amounted to 590 schillings. No definite figures are available for industrial employers, but the average monthly income of employers in agriculture amounted to 850 schillings and that of employers in all other fields (handicraft, trade, transportation, professional fields, etc.) came to 1000 schillings.

ECA HEAD CLYDE N. KING IMPRESSED BY AUSTRIAN AGRICULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS. The head of the American ECA Mission in Austria, Mr. Clyde N. King, declared in a conversation with leaders of Austrian agriculture on June 23d that he was sure Austrian agriculture would exceed its pre-war production by 1952. He noted that the situation of Austrian agriculture was basically sound, adding that the country's naturally fertile soil coupled with an abundant rainfall and the relatively rare occurrence of plant diseases had produced a greater per-acre yield than is current in the United States. But Austrian agriculture also had another great advantage over American farming, Mr. King continued, namely that it could always count on a permanently receptive market for its products. The problem of Austrian agriculture was therefore one of increase in production. The head of the ECA mission took stock of the considerable achievements made by Austrian agriculture and asserted that the latter represented a basic pillar of Austria's economy. Suitable participation of ECA funds was therefore necessary, but only a portion of the investments needed could be obtained from that source. The balance of these financial requirements would have to be met from Austrian sources.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN AUSTRIA CONTINUES TO DECREASE. During the month of May, the number of unemployed in Austria has again dropped by 16%. At the end of May, the country had 81,099 unemployed as compared to 96,745 at the end of April. At the end of May, a total of 56,577 persons received unemployment compensation; at the end of April, these numbered 69,937. The total number of gainfully employed individuals in Austria, at the end of May, amounted to 1,885,445 -- as the compulsory sickness insurance payments show. This is 0.2% more than the number of employed during the same month in 1948. The number of unfilled positions at the end of May amounted to 42,232, or somewhat less than at the end of April.

GIANT-SIZE BRICKS INVENTED IN AUSTRIA. The Viennese engineer Alfred Schmid, after many years of research, has invented a new type of giant-size brick which is now being mass-produced by a large Austrian construction company and which promises to become the basic material for a new, more practical, cheaper and better construction method.

This new "Boehler-Brick" (so named after the construction firm producing them) represents the equivalent of 16 building bricks of conventional size, but weighs only 12 kgs, or about a fourth of the total weight of 16 ordinary bricks. The new bricks are manufactured by the vibrating screen process from brick earth or from pumice stone and cement. The considerably lower cost of these bricks, as compared to the construction materials generally used heretofore, and the fact that a mason's helper can lay the giant bricks at a rate roughly equivalent to that achieved by four bricklayers doing piece-work with the ordinary type of bricks, account for considerable economies in cost, labor and time. The "Boehler Giant Brick" is 60 cm long, 24 cm wide and 18 cm high, and has three hollow cavities, two of which are closed and one open. The variably long lateral extremities of the hollow bricks produce, when laid, joggled butt joints. The bricks are characterized by their perfectly accurate edges and even surfaces, thereby eliminating the customary rough plastering necessary to smooth out the irregularities. Since the 24 cm thick Boehler wall is the equivalent of a 60 cm thick wall made with ordinary bricks, use of the new material will also result in a marked increase in quality. The new invention has caused quite a sensation in the Austrian market for construction materials and orders for this new material have already been received from abroad.

WATER DEVELOPMENT IN LOWER AUSTRIA. Work will be begun this summer on harnessing the water power of the Kampf River in Lower Austria. The project, which will include five storage reservoirs and several power plants, will produce 150 million kilowatts of current yearly when completed and thereby go a long way toward meeting the requirements of industrial current in Lower Austria. The overall cost of the project runs to about 215 million schillings (21.15 million dollars) and it will take some 3 to 4 years to complete. Its principal installations will be located at Krumau, Wegscheid and Ottenstein-am-Kampf.

AUSTRO-ARGENTINE TRADE TREATY SIGNED. A trade treaty has just been signed between Austria and Argentina for an exchange of goods valued at close to 15 million dollars. The treaty has a validity of one year. Austria will export to Argentina primarily iron (for 2 million dollars), high-grade steel (for 1.5 million dollars), machines, steel and iron products (for 4 million dollars), tractors and motorcycles (for 1.5 million dollars), paper and cellulose (for 3 millions) as well as other articles for a value of 3 million dollars. In return, Austria will receive from Argentina, among other items, sheep wool (for 4 million dollars), fodder (for 2.5 millions), hides (for 2 millions), linseed oil (for 2 millions) as well as cattle breeding products (1.5 millions), tobacco, bones, etc.

VORARLBERG EXPORT FAIR IN DORNBIRN. An important export fair will be held in Dornbirn, the industrial center of the Vorarlberg -- Austria's western-most province -- between July 24th and August 7th of this year. In keeping with the character of the province's economy, the textile industry will occupy a particularly prominent place in the export show, although machinery, metal and wood products, electrical appliances, leather goods, chemical articles and paper products will also be on display. Foreign countries will likewise participate: France intends to have a pavillion of its own and the Netherlands, Switzerland and Western Germany plan to have displays.

100 YEARS AUSTRIAN POLICE. The Austrian Police was established in its present form in the year 1849 -- exactly 100 years ago. Prior to that date, individual cities and provinces of Austria had local police forces of their own which were under control of the municipal or provincial authorities. In 1849, the Austrian "gendarmerie" was established by Imperial decree. The gendarmerie was equipped and trained as a self-contained unit. This police force was stationed throughout the entire national territory and its responsibility for the maintenance of order covered the open country and most of the small and medium cities. From its very inception the gendarmerie was subject to centralized control and management. The larger cities had the city police which was generally under municipal management and financed by

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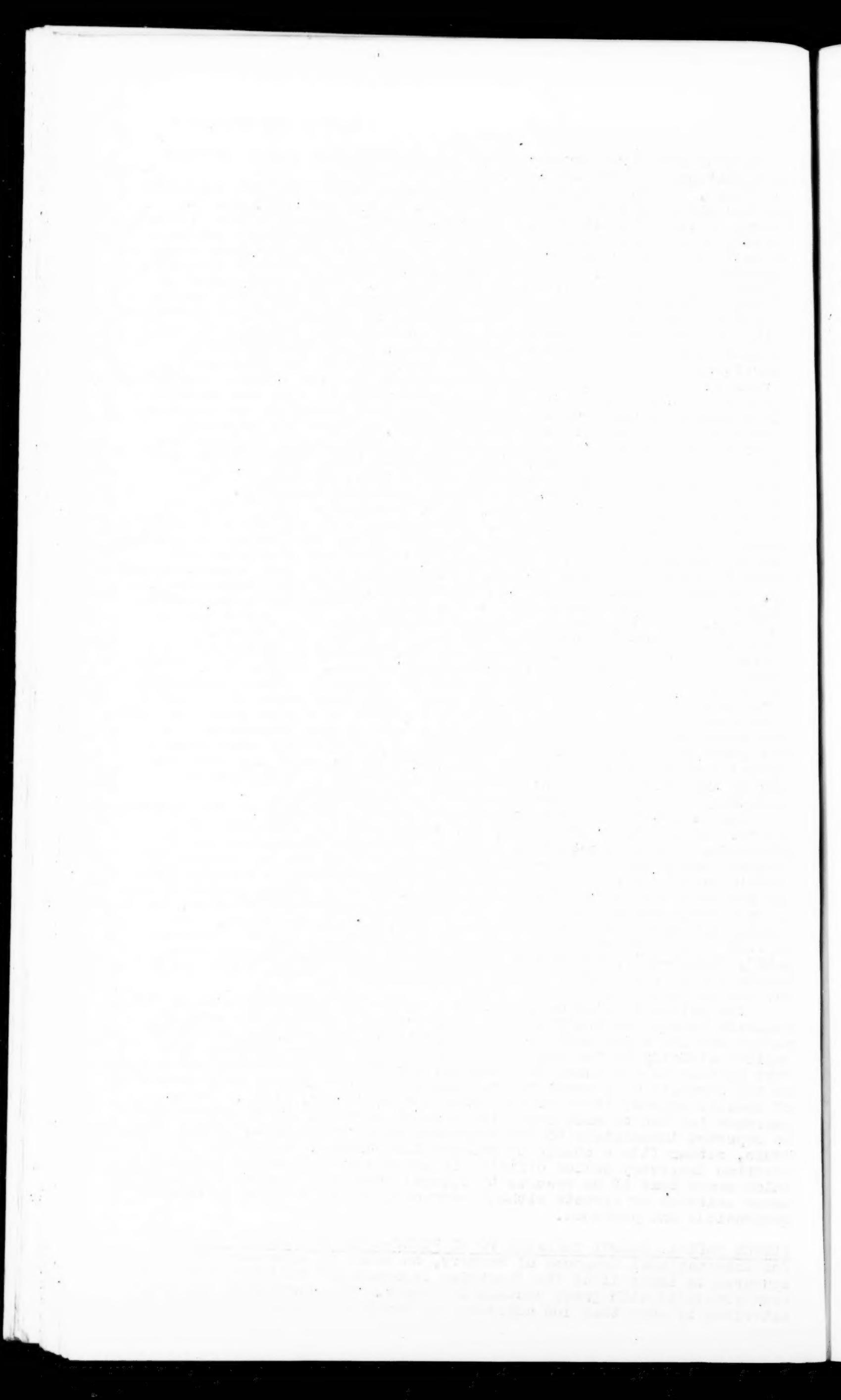
the various municipal governments. The highest city police official has traditionally been the mayor.

Today, in its present form, the Austrian Police is also organized into two major branches: the gendarmerie, on the one hand, and the federal police. The latter is under the direct control of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, and its activity covers the larger cities. The following cities have a federal police unit: Vienna, Linz, Graz, Klagenfurt, Innsbruck, Salzburg, Eisenstadt, Bregenz, Wiener Neustadt, St. Poelten, Steyr, Wells, Leoben and Villach. Police activities in all other cities and in the country are performed by the gendarmerie. The primary difference between the gendarmerie and the federal police is that the head of the gendarmerie in every federal province is under the jurisdiction of the provincial governor. The local provincial authorities therefore exercise a great influence on the gendarmerie, whereas the federal police is directed centrally from Vienna. Another major difference between the two police branches is that the gendarmerie's training, uniforms and arms are intended primarily for service in open country (mountain and forest areas), whereas the training, uniforms and arms of the federal police are principally designed for service in the larger cities. At the present time, the Austrian gendarmerie has 9,000 men; it is armed with rifles, pistols and short sabres. Its men are trained in special gendarmerie schools. The federal police, on the other hand, has a strength of 12,000 men, in addition to some 1300 detectives. It is armed with pistols and wooden clubs. Prospective members of the federal police are trained in police schools, where they receive two years of theoretical knowledge and practical training in the following fields: criminal law, constitutional law, commercial law, traffic law, criminology, first aid (obstetrics), national and regional characteristics, physical culture, marksmanship, Jiu-Jitsu, swimming, rowing, typing, stenography, etc. After having completed the two-year course at the police school, the aspiring policeman must pass an examination and then undergo an additional two years of practical training in actual police work. During this latter stage, the future policeman is confined to barracks. Final membership in the police is therefore obtained only after four years of intensive preparatory training. Police officers aspiring to higher positions must have completed the study of law and must have proven themselves for many years in the ranks of the police force. Detectives also receive special training and are usually selected from the rank and file members of the police. The University of Vienna has an Institute of Criminology and an Institute for Medical Jurisprudence.

The Vienna police force occupies a special position in the federal police. It has 7,500 policemen, 900 detectives and more than 1000 officials. The Vienna police, which is generally considered one of Europe's best, has endeavored since the end of the war to restore the force's high pre-war technical standing and standards of quality which had suffered much during the Nazi occupation. The Vienna police force is to a large extent motorized. It has several hundred vehicles, including special flying cars, homicide vans, motorcycles, etc. For service in the forest areas located within the city limits ("Wienerwald", "Donau-Au"), the Vienna police has a number of mounted units. Before the war, it also had 3 police planes and 5 tanks, which could not yet be replaced.

The police is also organized in a series of divisions such as the security force, the traffic force, the economic police, the criminal police and the state police. The activity of the Austrian police is defined strictly by the country's constitution and the federal laws that pertain to it; thus, for example, arrests may be carried out only on the strength of a court order. Exceptions are granted only in cases of special urgency (such as evasions, public unrest, etc.). House searches too can be made only with a court warrant. Every arrest must be reported immediately to the competent court which must, within 48 hours, either file a charge or release the suspect. According to Austrian law, every police official is personally liable for his actions, which means that if he resorts to illegal measures, such as for example house searches or arrests without warrants, he can be made personally responsible and punished.

VIENNA MEDICAL SCHOOL DECLARED TO BE FIRST-RATE BY AMERICAN SURGEONS.
The International Congress of Surgery, on which an extensive report appeared in issue 11 of the "Austrian Information" bulletin, has just been concluded with great success in Vienna. The convention was characterized by more than 100 addresses by leading surgeons of Europe and



and America and many active discussion sessions. This was the first time since the war that the International College of Surgeons held its convention in Vienna.

At a press conference, several noted American surgeons such as Prof. Herbert Acouff, President of the International College of Surgeons, Prof. H.E. Bacon (Philadelphia), Prof. Max Thorek and Prof. Schlemenson of New York, paid an enthusiastic tribute to Vienna's medical schools. They stated that the achievements of Viennese surgeons deserved full admiration and that Viennese surgery, despite the material difficulties with which it was faced, had again achieved a first-class rating. Prof. Thorek declared that Vienna had always been the Mecca of medicine and voiced his conviction that the city's medical institutes would, within a very short time, regain their leading position in the field. Prof. Acouff said that his stay in Vienna had shown him how much Viennese physicians were able to achieve in medical research and practice with relatively limited technical means. Many leading American surgeons, he continued, had received their training in Vienna and it was only thanks to the more favorable material conditions in the United States during the past decade, that they had been able to develop some surgical methods more thoroughly than had been possible in Vienna during the war. In the field of cancer research, for example, American medical men knew just as much as those in Vienna and in cancer surgery, the Viennese Medical School was just as advanced as the schools in America.

AUSTRIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TO GET 1500 ADDITIONAL TEACHERS. At least 1500 additional teachers will be appointed to teach in Austria's elementary schools because of the increased student attendance during the last few years and the registration of some 52,000 more pupils this fall. Talks between the Ministries of Finance and Education have now lead to an agreement to that effect. In Vienna alone, elementary schools will have 16,000 more pupils, an increase which would normally have called for the appointment of 600 additional teachers. But for reasons of economy, education authorities have been forced to limit new appointments to only 300 teachers for the time being.

KOKOSCHKA EXHIBITION AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART. The New York Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, will present the first major retrospective exhibition in New York of the greatest living Central European painter, the Austrian expressionist, Oskar KOKOSCHKA which will open to the Public on July 20th. Comprising 50 paintings, 15 graphic works and one sculpture, this small but select exposition will present major works of this master over the past 40 years. Especially for the New York showing, three of his most recent paintings of 1949 will be added. Assembled by the Boston Institute of Contemporary Art this exhibition has already been seen in Boston, in Washington, St. Louis and San Francisco. In presenting this exhibition recognition is given to a master who has had a profound influence on a number of American painters. Though little known in the United States he has been held in high esteem for many years and is well represented in this country both in public and private collections.

SUCCESSFUL GUEST PERFORMANCES OF VIENNA OPERA AND PHILHARMONIC IN BRUSSELS. The guest appearance of the Vienna Opera in Brussels at the end of June, which included performances of Mozart's "Don Giovanni", the "Abduction from the Seraglio" and Strauss' "Rosenkavalier", was hailed as a great success by the Belgian press. The Brussels paper "La Métropole" described the Vienna State Opera as the world's leading opera group and literally wrote: "An unforgettable performance. Our hats off to the entire Viennese ensemble. The Vienna State Opera is a truly musical organization whose lasting existence is assured."

At the same time, the Vienna Philharmonic gave a series of guest concerts under the baton of Dr. Karl Boehm including works by Mozart, Anton Bruckner, Richard Strauss and Johannes Brahms. The high point of these concerts was reached with the performance of Brahms' First Symphony which was attended by the Belgian Queen who, after the performance, received the conductor and the soloist Ljuba Welitsch in her royal box and congratulated them on their success.

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RECONSTRUCTION WORK PROGRESSING ON VIENNA OPERAHOUSE. Reconstruction work on the Vienna State Operahouse, which had burned out completely as a result of an air attack in the spring of 1945, is making rapid progress. Thanks to the contribution of additional funds by the state, a stoppage of work was avoided. Most of the work is being done on the roof which is expected to be completed by the fall. The roof, when finished, will consist of a concrete iron shell, a layer of asphalt and a protective screen of sheet copper. Intensive work is also being done on completion of the stage. The installation of several moving lateral stages will permit three simultaneous scenery changes without major rearrangement of the stage. In back of the opera building, a 72-foot high truck elevator will be erected for lifting the scenery trucks to the level of the stage where they can then be loaded and unloaded directly. This and similar technical installations will make the Vienna Opera House one of the most modern theaters in the world.

The auditorium itself -- which is being designed by architects Prossinger, Boltenstern and Kosak -- will be outfitted with completely new gallery and loge constructions. On the outside of the building, large open balconies are being built for use by the audience during intermissions. These repairs and improvements are scheduled to be finished during the course of the summer, so that parts of the building (the foyer, vestibule and grand hall) will already be available for musical performances in the fall. Termination of the stage and other parts of the house will, however, require much more time.

SPANISH RIDING SCHOOL OF VIENNA PERFORMS IN ROME. On the occasion of the International Spring Equestrian Tournament in Rome, the Spanish Court Riding School of Vienna gave its first post-war foreign guest performance. The performance took place on the Piazza di Siena in front of the Castello dell'Orologio and was warmly applauded by more than 35,000 onlookers who repeatedly and spontaneously voiced their admiration for the traditional figures of the equestrian quadrilles. Italian President Einaudi and Princess Margaret of England attended the show.

AUSTRIANS WIN FIRST THREE PRIZES IN INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITION. The first three prizes of the International Youth Music Competition in Geneva were awarded to three musically-gifted young Austrians. The first prize went to the 16-year old pianist Grethe Scherzer. The second and third prizes were won by the Viennese pianists Herbert Seiter and Eduard Mrazek, respectively. Grethe Scherzer, who hails from Wolfsberg in Carinthia, is now studying at the Vienna Academy of Music. Next year, she will participate in the International Chopin Contest in Warsaw.

AUSTRIA'S MOTION PICTURE HOUSES CLOSE FOR DAY IN PROTEST. On June 28th, more than 800 motion picture houses -- or almost 90% of Austria's movie theaters -- were closed in protest against a new federal entertainment tax on cinema tickets. Motion picture exhibitors called the one-day strike because the new tax would increase the price of theater tickets and because the proceeds from it would go neither to the film industry nor to the theaters themselves. The revenue from the new tax, which has not yet been approved by Parliament, is to be used for the financial assistance of those Austrian legitimate stages -- primarily the small theatrical groups in Vienna and those in the provinces -- which have been faced with insurmountable monetary difficulties.

FIRST AUSTRIAN WOMEN ADMITTED TO DIPLOMATIC POSTS. For the first time in the history of the Austrian Foreign Service, women have been appointed to diplomatic posts. Henceforth, women will be on an equal footing with men in the country's foreign service.

NEW FILM MAGAZINE BEGINS PUBLICATION IN VIENNA. A few months ago, the Amandus Publishing Company in Vienna began publication of a new film magazine, "Filmkunst". The new publication, which is appearing quarterly, will be devoted to the development of the motion picture as an artistic medium and will be written and edited by motion picture experts from several countries.

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